

Personal Relationship Policy – Guidance on Handling a Disclosure Between a Member of Staff and Student

Click on the section you require, and you will be taken directly to the correct section of this document.

Contents

Familiarise yourself with the Personal Relationship Policy	2
Definition of a Personal Relationship	2
Engaging in a Personal Relationship with a student	2
Receiving a Disclosure Form	2
Assessing a Disclosure	3
Checklist for Assessing	3
If there is no Conflict of Interest Identified	3
Addressing an Identified Conflict of Interest	3
Unsure if a Conflict of Interest Exits	5
Receiving confirmation that the Personal Relationship has ended or there has been a change in circumstances	5
Regularly Reviewing New Arrangements that are put in place	6
Additional Support & Resources	6
Be aware of Data protection and Subject Access Request requirements	6

Action	Supporting information
Familiarise yourself with the Personal Relationship Policy	<p>The Personal Relationships Policy must be read in conjunction with this guidance.</p> <p>For guidance on handling a disclosure between members of staff please refer to the Guidance on Handling a Disclosure Between Staff Members.</p>
Definition of a Personal Relationship	<p>A personal relationship, as defined in section 3 of the policy, is a consensual intimate relationship including but not limited to marital, life partner, sexual and/or romantic partner which goes beyond the bounds of a platonic or work relationship. The relationship may be an in-person relationship or online relationship. This includes a brief or one-off occurrence as the relationship may lead to real or perceived conflicts of interest, or misuse of power and authority.</p>
Engaging in a Personal Relationship with a student	<p>The University prohibits staff from having professional or pastoral responsibility, either directly or indirectly, with a student with whom they are in a personal relationship with.</p> <p>Personal relationships between staff and students can generate perceived, and sometimes real, inequalities that affect those in the relationship and also other members of staff and students.</p> <p>It is recognised, due to the size and nature of work carried out at the University, that personal relationships may already exist and emerge. As a result, a disclosure procedure has been put in place in order to minimise unintentional consequences and risk.</p>
Receiving a Disclosure Form	<p>A member of staff must disclose, using the Personal Relationship Disclosure Form, if they are in, or have been in a personal relationship with an incoming/current student with whom they will have professional or pastoral responsibility, either directly or indirectly.</p> <p>The completed form must be sent in good time i.e. prior to the incoming student starting their course of study.</p> <p>On receiving a completed form you must deal with the disclosure in a timely, sensitive and confidential manner.</p>

<p>Assessing a Disclosure</p>	<p>You must assess the extent and nature of the staff member’s professional interaction with the student, for example:</p> <p>Is/will the staff member be directly involved in any aspect of the student’s learning, academic assessment or their pastoral care?</p> <p>Are/will they be in a position to influence the student’s academic progress?</p> <p>Are they involved in selecting the student for a course of study/research programme and/or allocating scholarships, research grants and/or facilities?</p> <p>Are they involved in decision-making regarding a student's immigration status either through pastoral care or teaching and learning?</p> <p>Are they involved in any aspect of the student’s non-academic life on campus, e.g. their accommodation?</p>
<p>Checklist for Assessing</p>	<p>Section 4 of the Personal Relationship Disclosure Form provides some key questions to consider when carrying out your assessment. Section 4 of the form should be completed accordingly on completing the assessment.</p>
<p>If there is no Conflict of Interest Identified</p>	<p>If there is no conflict of interest identified, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete Section 4 of Personal Relationships Disclosure Form and provide a copy to the staff member and student. • the completed form should be sent via a service request. A service request should be raised using the category “Conflict of Interest” and the individual’s employee number should be clearly detailed. The service request will go straight to the HR Helpline Team and will be dealt with in a confidential and sensitive manner. • the HR Helpline team will save a copy of the form on the individual’s employee file under the restricted casework section of the file.
<p>Addressing an Identified Conflict of Interest</p>	<p>If a conflict of interest is identified, you must meet, separately, with the staff member and student to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess the extent of their professional contact

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure the staff member understands they must not take part in any activity related to the student’s course of study etc • ensure the student is aware of the disclosure and understands and is comfortable with the arrangements to be put in place to protect both parties, and that both parties are expected to comply with these arrangements • re-organise the staff member’s duties to ensure they do not, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - take part in the admissions/selection process relating to the student - tutor, act as research supervisor or provide technical support to the student - mark/assess/provide feedback on the student’s work, including anonymised marking - provide pastoral care to the student - administer any activities in which the student is involved - provide references or recommendations for the student - decide on resources available to the student e.g. grant funding <p>Ensure that, in re-organising such duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the privacy of both parties is respected - only those involved in facilitating the re-organisation are privy to the disclosure - the student is neither advantaged nor disadvantaged (See Note) - the impact on other students is taken into account and action taken to minimise any disruption to their learning/research environment - the impact on other staff is taken into account and action taken to minimise any disruption to their role - complete the Personal Relationship Disclosure Form detailing all actions and decisions taken and provide a copy to the staff member and student. - the completed form should be sent via a service request. A service request should be raised using the category “Conflict of Interest” and the individuals employee number should be clearly detailed. The service request will go straight to the HR Helpline Team
--	--

	<p>and will be dealt with in a confidential and sensitive manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the HR Helpline team will save a copy of the form on the individuals SharePoint employee file under the restricted casework section. - put in place a system to ensure these decisions are regularly reviewed (e.g. prior to each academic year) and put in place revised arrangements when necessary. <p>Note: If the student is involved in a highly specialised course of study/area of research and it is not possible to assign them to a different tutor or supervisor, the manager should put in place arrangements to ensure the member of staff does not have sole responsibility for making decisions relating to the student and their work. This will involve seeking the consent of the student to, for example: the appointment of a co-supervisor; arrangements for moderation etc.</p>
<p>Unsure if a Conflict of Interest Exits</p>	<p>In line with this policy, if you are in any doubt about there being a conflict of interest and/or need to consult with other staff, the member of staff must be asked to take no part in any activity related to the other member of staff's employment until a firm decision is reached.</p>
<p>Receiving confirmation that the Personal Relationship has ended or there has been a change in circumstances</p>	<p>If a personal relationship ends or there is a change in circumstance, for example, the student ceases to be a matriculated student or transfers to another School/College, the staff member must advise you in writing by completing section 5 of the original disclosure form submitted.</p> <p>You must again meet, separately, with the staff member and student to confirm matters and to assess what if anything needs to be put in place to continue to protect the interests of both parties.</p> <p>You must complete Section 6 of the form confirming any measures that have been put in place or action taken as a result of the disclosed change and confirm these have been communicated to the staff and student.</p> <p>A service request should be raised using the category "Conflict of Interest" and the form should be attached, clearly detailing the individuals employee number. The Service Request will go straight to the HR Helpline Team and will be dealt with in a confidential and sensitive manner. The HR Helpline team will</p>

	save a copy of the form on the individuals employee file under the restricted casework section.
Regularly Reviewing New Arrangements that are put in place	It is important that you put in place a system to ensure any new arrangements are regularly reviewed.
Additional Support & Resources	<p>Further support, information and resources are:</p> <p>Children and Protected Adults policy Conflict of Interest policy Dignity and Respect policy; Disciplinary procedure Student complaints procedure Taught Assessment Regulations Research Assessment Regulations</p>
Be aware of Data protection and Subject Access Request requirements	<p>Information relating to a disclosure should be held in line with the University's Retention Schedule.</p> <p>Remember that any individual may make a subject access request to see data about a disclosure which relates to them, and which will include any emails between you and HR and anyone else you correspond with about the disclosure. Therefore, you must be prepared that any of your correspondence may be seen by both individuals in the personal relationship.</p>